



Illinois Trail Riders

Dedicated To Keeping Horses On Our Trails

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www.illinoistrailriders.com

February, March, April 2006

Fast Response Alert System For Equestrian Trail Issues

Peter Veit, who is on the board of Illinois Trail Riders, Horsemen's Council of Illinois, and TROD (Trail Riders of DuPage), renewed a call to All Illinois Equestrian Trail Riding Organizations for the "Development of a Fast Response Alert System" to deal with equestrian trail issues. He feels that events this past year demonstrated a need to further expand a system for rapid communication and mutual support within the equestrian community.

Peter, like members of the other boards on which he serves, wants to broaden the cooperative response by including more existing equestrian organizations in the existing network for a more immediate interaction between the three levels of trail advocacy organizations. In Illinois they are: 1) Horsemen's Council of Illinois (HCI), 2) Illinois Trail Riders (ITR), and 3) the local saddle club. These groups each have different orientations, strengths, and limitations. They each interact with different segments of the horse industry and general public.

Three Levels of Trail Advocacy Organizations

1. **Horsemen's Council of Illinois** is a statewide association of associations which also has numerous individual members. They operate on a statewide level with a professional office in Springfield and a paid lobbyist. HCI addresses many matters of concern to all equestrians including legislation, transport of horses from outside of the state, medical restrictions for such transport, issues such as the \$2.00 license transfer tax being devoted to "recreational trails" (as opposed to "bicycle trails"), etc., etc. They produce the Illinois Horse Fair in Springfield and are affiliated with the American Horse Council to better address issues that cross state borders. HCI also has strong ties with the University of Illinois Department of Animal Science (both at Urbana and Carbondale). They utilize a service called CAPWHIZ to alert members of immediate concerns and calls to action. Trail advocacy is only one small portion of HCI activities.

2. **Illinois Trail Riders** is also a statewide organization having both individuals and trail clubs as members. ITR's primary interest is in statewide advocacy for trail creation, trail preservation, and trail facility operation. Board members are active at various national and regional conferences and speak out on trail issues wherever needed. One of the most important functions of ITR is serving as an information clearinghouse, to communicate with local clubs, state and national organizations and, when needed, offer support, resources and networking opportunities. The sale of The Illinois Trail Riders **Handbook of Trails, Camps, and Services** in Illinois is the primary source of money for ITR activities at a state, local and national (continued on page 7)

Great News About Illinois Recreational Trail Program Funding!

Dave Sellman of IDNR Grants Division announced that March 1st is the deadline for submitting grant proposals for RTP Funding. T-Rail Projects which include equestrian components will get priority funding because there will be an increased number of points in the evaluation process for inclusion of horses on a trail system.

If there is an upcoming trail in your neighborhood, please advise your trail committees and public officials that they should include riding, biking and walking in their project if they want the best chance of receiving state grant money.

We can only dream of ways that RTP Funds, Bike Path Funds, Transportation Enhancement, and Open Space and Land Acquisition money (see page 5 for information on Funding for Open Space and Land Acquisition money) can best be coordinated to stimulate and assist communities in creating a system of parks, trails and greenways that everyone can share, love and protect.

Planning groups are working all over the state - from the Grand Illinois Trail Counties, across Route 66, down the Mississippi River Trail, in the Capital, the Quad Cities, Tri-Cities and bi-state areas.

Even in the rural areas amid farms and the Shawnee Forest someone is sharing the vision of safe places to recreate and ride and trying to figure out ways to pay for them and protect them for the future.

Ask your public officials and public employees if they share this dream for your community. Then be a part of it.

Did you know?

- Many metropolitan areas have a greenways and trails plan as a major component of their master planning efforts.
- Greenways help to make urban sprawl manageable and livable.
- Watershed planning is increasing and Greenways, Trails and Open Space are important components.
- That the Land Trust Alliance, Farmland Trusts, wildlife/conservation enthusiasts, recreation advocates and environmental groups can be great partners when trail coalitions are organized.
- The Horse Industry and our horses are the "Last Stand" of Agriculture in Illinois suburbs and metropolitan areas.

Illinois Trail Riders

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Advertising

Promote your event or sell your items through the *Newsletter* which reaches over 2,000 riders around the State of Illinois on at least a quarterly basis (February, May, August, November).

Ad deadline is the 10th of the month proceeding publication date. Ad copy along with payment must be received by that date. See rates alongside.

Send your camera ready copy and prepayment to Bobbi Glab, 4006 Oak Avenue, Unit 3W, McHenry, IL 60050-6311, 815 578-8960. All ads are subject to review and approval prior to publication.

Deadline for articles is the 10th of the month preceding publication date.

Ad Type	One-Time Rate	Per Issue Four-Time Rate
Business Card	\$18.00	\$13.00
Quarter Page	\$25.00	\$21.00
Half Page	\$35.00	\$28.00
Full page	\$50.00	\$40.00
CLASSIFIED: \$10.00 PER ISSUE, 40 WORDS OR LESS		

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Simply enter our Care Code when you complete your order.

Our Care Code: IL Trail Riders

Illinois Trail Riders Handbook Of Trails, Camps and Services

Over 300 pages of information on Illinois trails and trail riding. A total of over 24,000 rideable miles.

Each listing contains pertinent information on each area including directions to the facility, a description of the trails, a detailed map, camping facilities and a contact name and phone number.

All this for \$20.00 (plus \$3.00 postage and handling)



Order Form On Back Page

From the President

February always seems to be the busiest time of my year with Illinois Trail Riders. This quarterly *Newsletter* has to be finished and mailed as close to the first of February as possible. It is most important *Newsletter* of the year because it highlights our annual meeting at the Horse Fair. This *Newsletter* also is printed in the largest volume to be handed out free at the Horse Fair Booth. If I were a business seeking to target the Illinois trail-riding participants, this is the *Newsletter* I would especially want to advertise in.

January through March is when I am most likely to hear from other advocates and speak with those who share the vision. Maybe winter is when we all get "cabin fever" and have more time to do paperwork and plan for the year's worth of events we hope to attend with horses and friends. By April most of us are dealing with the rain, mud, and longer daylight hours as we condition and start on the "spring clean up" of our horses, barns, pastures, fences, trailers and trails. The May, August, and November *Newsletters* seem easier to me because I am out on the trails observing and networking. While attending events and riding there are more things to talk about, communicate and report on. Non-horse crusaders in the Trails and Greenways campaign seem to have different seasonal priorities and many of them hold jobs that allow them time to attend meetings, events and advocate for trails on a year-around basis.

My email is filled with dates for the upcoming events, trail rides and competitions. The same information is available on a multitude of web sites. CMO (Competitive Mounted Orienteering) has been scheduling their competitions and discussing rule changes. NATRC (The North American Trail Ride Conference) recently sent out the 2006 ride book. UMECRA (Upper Midwest Endurance and Competitive Ride Association) has just elected a new president and board of officers and has its tentative ride schedule for the sanctioned events in all six states. AHDRA (Arabian Horse Distance Riding Association) and the multitude of other breed organizations are hoping you will sit on the back of a registered horse and turn in your mileage and points so that they can honor the best trail horses of that genetic pool.

None of these trail ride programs could survive if someone wasn't advocating for horse trails, managing specific events, and collecting mileage or points. Individuals participating in trail riding with a purpose beyond personal satisfaction and love of horses or nature are among my favorite. Without decent trails and trail heads there would be no benefit rides to fund medical research, equine educational programs, special concerns or great causes. Every Illinois Trail Rider should be involved in the wider vision.

As the President of Illinois Trail Riders I hear a lot of news that could, and does, affect us. I have to sort and prioritize information so that everyone who needs to know will be informed and will get energized enough to participate. There is much information locally and nationally that is of value to us. Various actions may be more effective at a local level, at a state level or in the larger arena of the national government. There are campaigns and alerts, opportunities and deadlines for action, and strategies for change that need to be attended to. There is a huge collection of diverse horse industry advocates and trail riding enthusiasts that are yet to be organized. Illinois Trail Riders would like to assist the Horsemen's Council of Illinois in bringing everyone under the roof. I hope you have answered the call for a better/faster

means of contacting each other "networking" by submitting your saddle club or horse-related organization to the data base (see pages 1 and 9). Our goals of advocating for trails can only be furthered if there are many ears and eyes to observe, numerous voices that shout out, and strong, steadfast hands and minds that get engaged and participate.

Denise

HCI Ramblings

Shared by Frank Bowman, President, Illinois Horse Council

In the past four or five years as President of the Horsemen's Council of Illinois (HCI), I have had the opportunity to deal with many issues important to the trail community, met with most of Illinois' state and federal legislators to express your concerns, gotten a few black eyes discussing unpopular but necessary topics, heard from many of you to discuss specific trail and land access issues and even gotten to go riding a few times though not as much as I'd really like to.

I heard it reported recently that Illinois ranks 48th out of the 50 states in the amount of publicly managed land available for recreation. Yes, I understand that this sorry fact includes even the Shawnee National Forest "public lands."

To make matters worse for those of us who like to travel the country on horseback, last year the legislature, bowing to pressure from the trial lawyers, cannibalized liability protections offered to private land owners. Those who allow legal recreational activities, like fishing, horseback riding, bird watching and picnicking on their properties are no longer covered under the act. Protections were provided for only hunting and recreational shooting just in time for deer season.

IDNR apparently had to agree or run the risk of not being able to harvest enough deer to manage the population. I might suggest considering a seasonal approach to managing other populations as well. In my opinion, as a landowner and equestrian, IDNR let us down rather than taking control.

Anyway, at the time of this writing there have been two new versions of the bill introduced to remedy this situation, HB4536 and SB3072. Neither of them specifically includes horseback riding. Now it's more important than ever that each of us contact our State Senators and Representatives and lobby for needed revisions to the Recreational Use of Land and Waters Act. Tell them horseback riding needs to be included in the wording! Give them a call or drop them an email and express your concerns. Log onto the HCI website at www.horsemenscouncil.org for more information on current issues and use the legislative section as an easy way to make yourself heard.

There is grant money available for equestrian projects through the Illinois Trails Grant Program (RTP funded), but the equestrian community needs to help identify and sponsor projects and initiatives. Nobody is going to do the work for you. Put on your thinking caps and get those grant proposals ready to go. Visit www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newtrail2.htm for more information.

Be sure to stop in for a short visit with the land manager at your favorite park, if nothing else, just to let them know that you had a good time. Hope to see you all at the 18th Annual Illinois Horse Fair March 3-5 in Springfield.

Newsbits

On April 29, **Equestrian Land Conservation Resource** will have their big fundraising gala at Arabian Knights Farm, Willowbrook, at 6:00 p.m. Their website, www.elcr.org, states: "The evening will feature an extensive dinner buffet, with a creative make-your-own-sundae finale. After dinner a DJ will provide dance music. There will be line dance instruction for those who wish to learn some new steps. A silent auction with a wide range of items, both horsey and non-horse related, will run through the evening with the winning bidders announced after the dinner. The proceeds of the Gala Trails Event will benefit the Equestrian Land Conservation Resource and its work to promote access to trails and riding land by horseback riders." Order tickets on their website or by calling them at 815 858-3501.

After our report on the outhouse incident and lack of toilet facilities at **Pere Marquette State Park** in the last *Newsletter*, new information has come to us. There are now two clean, temporary, portable potties placed in the parking area at the equestrian area. Sources say that IDNR found them being underused in one area and moved them to the site to accommodate the needs of the equestrians. They have the added expense of having them pumped monthly, but riders say they are grateful for the facility and it is being put to good use, especially during the winter months when it is necessary to "unbundle" the layers of warm clothing for a moment of comfort in a sheltered space.

IDNR and the Illinois Greenways & Trails Council will host their regular, regional, bi-yearly workshops in the Fall of 2006. Planning is just getting underway for these working meetings now. One meeting will be south of I-80 in northern Illinois. The Southern meeting will be somewhere around Effingham or Mt. Vernon. If equestrians are involved in planning, then topics will be relevant to equestrians so that horse trail advocates and riders will want to attend. Call Denise Maxwell, ITR President, if you want to be involved in the workshop planning process which is starting in February. More information on attending the workshops will be available as the dates get closer.

Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference will hold it's next meeting in Chicago in the Fall of 2007. Keep your ears open for information, especially if you live in Northeastern Illinois.

Don't forget that **National Trails Day is Saturday, June 3**, and that you, your saddle club, your barn, your friends and your neighbors should gather now to plan and register your trail event. Educate someone about horse trails, organize a trail maintenance project at your favorite site, dedicate a new trail, go for a ride. Visit the website www.nationaltrailsday.org to find out how to register and promote your event - then - click on Trail Trotters' Day on the home page at www.elcr.org to find complete information about the regional and national awards available. Be counted twice! For all of your hard work protecting trails and our right to ride, get recognized. One of the goals of Trail Trotters' Day is to provide an information source as to how much, where, and when horsemen are giving back to their trail communities. Trail Trotters' Day is a free program! So is National Trails Day! There is **NO CHARGE** for registering, advice, ideas, awards and participating. By dovetailing Trail Trotter projects with National Trails Day on June 3, 2006, horseback riders will be

highlighted as part of the national trails movement that has been generated by National Trails Day. Questions? Just ask.

Do you want to attend the 2006 National Trails Symposium in Quad Cities, October 19-22, 2006? Illinois Trail Riders has purchased a booth at the American Trails Conference in the Quad Cities the 19-22 of October '06. You can volunteer to help at the Illinois Trail Rider booth and promote horse trails among those who may never have touched a horse. We will be marketing equestrian trail riding and the right to use trails. We must educate and advocate to the managers and trail users who will be attending this symposium for the inclusion of equestrians in planning and using public facilities. We would like to educate them on all aspects of trail riding, the horse industry, and in general promote the inclusion of horses in the future of the trails and greenway movement to **NON- HORSE PEOPLE** who affect our ability to trail ride greatly. Can you help us with something like this? Go to www.american/trails.org and have a look at their information to see if you and your organization fit into this symposium or into our booth. Our overall goal is to promote horses and our inclusion on trails in every community, on state and public lands, and in the hearts and minds of those who build and promote further development and use of trails. You can help! Be a volunteer!

Ohio Valley Equestrian Trails Symposium, April 27-30, 2006, Wrangler's Campground, Land Between the Lakes, Cadiz, Kentucky. Leading experts in trail design, recruiting volunteers, working with other trail groups, and rail/trail projects will present non-stop sessions designed to educate trail riding enthusiasts on the issues impacting the future of trail riding. A one-half day session on building trails that last. Get your hands dirty building a trail segment. Embark on a scenic journey through 70 miles of horse and wagon trails over hills, forests and the shores of Lake Barkley. Stay at the Southeast's premier horse camp, Wrangler's Campground, with over 100 electric hookups, modern bathhouses, rental cabins and a restaurant. Contact: Kentucky Horse Council, OVETS Planning Committee, 4063 Iron Works Pkwy. Bldg. B Ste. 9, Lexington, KY 40511, 800 459-4677 or 859 367-0509.

Dick Westfall's term appointment as **Manager of the IDNR's Greenways and Trails Section** has been renewed for four years.

Will County News – The **annual fee for equestrians** wanting to ride on select Forest Preserve trails has been eliminated beginning January 1, 2006.

Route 66 meetings are for all who are interested! Community officials, road officials, tourism, planners, bicyclists and interest organizations (even horse riders) are invited. People are encouraged to come and share ideas. Talks continue in identifying the Route 66 Trail statewide alignment. Horses have not been excluded and much of the trail is currently aligned with roads. Route 66 is a historical transportation route where even horses traveled. Everyone – Chicago to St. Louis - is welcome to learn more about this long-term project. Equestrians will need to become involved with local planning groups in areas where multi use can be encouraged. Contact Marla Gursh, Recreation Planning, IDNR, 217 782-3715, mgursh@dnrmail.state.il.us, or Ed Barsotti, League of Illinois Bicyclists, 630 978-0583, ed@bikelib.org.

2006 Illinois Horse Fair

This year's Horse Fair will start Friday, March 3, 2006, and go through Sunday, March 5, 2006.

Chris Cox, back by popular demand, will be joined by renowned Western trail, reining, dressage and saddle seat equitation clinicians at the 18th annual Horse Fair for an outstanding educational program. Chris Cox is originally from Australia, but now lives at his Outback Ranch in Mineral Wells, TX. At Horse Fair, he will do three sessions in the Livestock Center on Friday, on Saturday and Sunday in the Coliseum he'll do two-hour round pen demonstrations in the morning and training sessions in the afternoon using the full area, plus host Q&A sessions in the Livestock Center Seminar Hall.

Illinois Horse Fair offers many opportunities to enhance your equestrian education in a full program of demonstrations, riding clinics and seminars.

For more information contact Horsemen's Council of Illinois, P.O. Box 646, Springfield, IL 62708, 217 585-1600, www.horsemencouncil.org.

And don't forget – Visit the Illinois Trail Riders booth at the Horse Fair. Anyone who would be willing and able to spend a couple of hours working the booth at Horse Fair, please call Vice President, Jean Greenlee, at 815 292-3010 or email us at ILTrRdrs@illinoistrailriders.com as soon as possible. (Before Jean has to call you!)

Shawnee Update

Shared by Sue Perina, past President of ITR

There isn't much is going on right now. We are waiting for the results of the Environmental Impact Study on the trails we commented on last fall. If the Forest Service picks their "preferred alternative," I'm afraid it will be very restrictive. There are some good points to that alternative so we are hoping for a combination of several alternatives.

The Forest Service is supposed to come out with a new "Forest Plan" later this year. I hope that equestrians will become involved and send in comments.

I would like to comment on something that Larry Frye (ITR director) and I had discussed. It is our feeling that if the equestrian community doesn't become more united in our endeavors to promote equines, become more involved and especially get legislators involved, we will have no voice in what happens with trails in the future. I believe that if just the trail riders would band together we would be much stronger but if all equestrian disciplines would come together we would be a "force to be reckoned with."

Oftentimes we are so focused on our own discipline (I'll admit that I'm guilty of that) we fail to see the big picture. It's difficult sometimes to be on the same page with those in our own discipline.

As an example, my discipline, which is trail riding, is very fragmented. We need to keep our eyes on the goal - KEEP OUR TRAILS! It doesn't matter by what means we get there, just so we get there. We may have different ways of doing it, but what should that matter. Oftentimes egos and personalities get in the way of the goal. If we don't lay that aside, we will all loose.

I hope everyone will give this some thought and see if you don't agree. And then put it into practice and also get involved.

Thanks all and I hope to see you on the trails this spring. I can't wait!

Notice Of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of Illinois Trail Riders will be held on Saturday, March 4, 2006, at 11:30 a.m. in the lower level meeting room of the Livestock Exhibition Center at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield, IL, the site of the Illinois Horse Fair. According to the By-Laws, the purpose of the meeting is for the "election of directors and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting."

If you are a member, please plan on attending so you can be updated on ITR plans and activities. If you are not a member, we invite you to attend anyway so you can become acquainted with ITR and our trail advocacy work.

Please plan on attending - don't be left out.

Our guest speaker will be Jim Fraley from the Illinois Farm Bureau. He will speak about the Equine Round Table and other efforts the Illinois Farm Bureau is making in the name of equestrians who prefer trail riding.

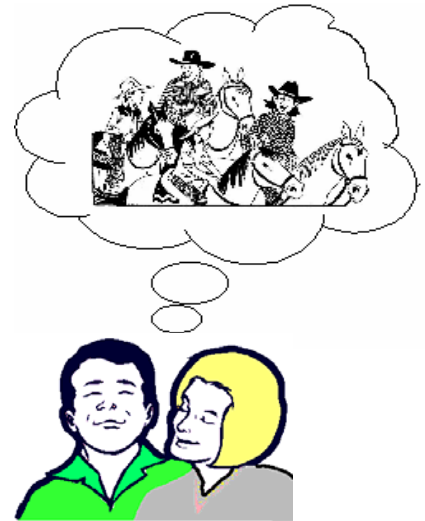
Illinois Trail Riders is currently accepting nominations to replace retiring board members.

If you or another horse trail advocate has an interest in joining us workaholics, please let us know. Ideal candidates would have plenty of time to attend meetings, workshops and conferences where trail education, planning, networking, and trail decisions are occurring. Our members wish to have members who are active, knowledgeable, and well spoken to represent us. We are looking for individuals from diverse equestrian disciplines and backgrounds, who believe that horses have a place on trails and in our communities, now and in the future. We need members from different parts of the state to step forward and become involved as volunteers, promoting our goals and mission at community, regional, state and Federal levels.

If you are interested, or know someone who would be a treasure to our organization, please submit name, address, phone number and brief "resume" of the nominee to Denise Maxwell, President, Illinois Trail Riders, 4873 Indian Hills Edwardsville, IL 62025. Leave a message at 618 656-2951 or (contact us online at ILTrRdrs@illinoistrailriders.com). Elections will be held at the Annual Meeting.

Another Way to Find Funding for Open Space and Trails

In Illinois there are many grant programs that assist in a local government's ability to acquire and develop trails and Greenways. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources manages several of these programs including one that goes by the name OSLAD. Here is some information about this mechanism to fund projects. Many units of government compete for this source of funding when trying to secure land (continued on page 6)



Another Way to Find Funding for

Open Space and Trails (continued from page 5)

for parks and public recreational space. That space could eventually be used to allow equestrian trails and facilities.

What does the OSLAD program mean to Illinois land acquisition efforts?

The OSLAD program is a 50-50 matching program with local units of government providing at least 50% of the required funding. The state's investment leverage is at least on a two-to-one basis of donations of land at the local level saving taxpayers literally millions of dollars.

Since its inception in 1986, the OSLAD program has acquired 8,631 acres of land in Illinois for parks, open spaces and natural areas. These properties have been saved from development and are now available for public recreation.

In the past three years alone, the OSLAD program has acquired 1,860 acres of open space and parkland for the people of Illinois.

Currently, the state of Illinois ranks 48th among the 50 states in public open space, per capita. With the proposed cuts and elimination of conservation funding, Illinois will fall even further behind.

How is the OSLAD program funded?

The OSLAD program is not funded through the state's General Operating Budget.

In 1989, in order to help insure more stable and predictable funding, a portion of the revenues derived from the state's Real Estate Transfer Tax was specifically dedicated for the OSLAD program.

What impact has the OSLAD program had on park development in Illinois?

94 of Illinois' 102 counties have received OSLAD grant funding.

A total of more than \$197 million has been awarded to local park and recreation agencies since 1986 through the OSLAD program. These dollars have been matched by local tax dollars and private donations with the local investment providing more than 60 percent of the funding. This is a clear demonstration that state dollars provide strong leverage for local investment through the OSLAD program.

Demand for OSLAD funds have far outpaced availability. Between 1986 and 2004 more than \$366 million was requested. Only about 54 percent of that total was awarded. The need for funding is overwhelming.

Recent studies show that one of the greatest contributors to habitat fragmentation is sprawl. Illinois, the sixth most populous state, is losing more than 1.30 acres a day, or 41,420 acres of farmland each year, to sprawl.

Illinois' suburban fringes are undergoing a rapid transformation as its population seeks larger lot sizes away from urban centers. Without the protection of open space, on an ongoing basis, opportunities for preservation will be lost forever.

Do the people of Illinois place a value on parks and open space?

According to a statewide opinion poll, conducted by Richard Day Research of Evanston, 95 percent of Suburban Cook and collar county residents believe that their community is developing too fast and that open space should be preserved for future generations.

Nearly half of the Suburban Cook and collar county

residents polled believe that there are no more important issues in their community than the protection of open space.

93 percent of the residents in Suburban Cook and the collar counties believe that park and open space help improve their property values.

Key Findings – Illinois Land at Risk – A Statewide Assessment of Public Park and Green Space Needs (a report developed by the Trust for public lands and the Illinois Association of Park Districts)

In order to meet public demand for parks and open space, local and state agencies would need to acquire over 83,000 acres over the next five years.

The Chicago Park District plans acquisition of 250 additional acres at a projected cost of \$550 million.

Renovation and/or restoration funding needs for existing parks and recreation facilities in Illinois are estimated in excess of \$600 million.

The need to preserve open and natural lands is great. In 2002, Illinois state and local units of government identified open space and recreation land acquisition needs totaling almost \$1.2 billion.

Congressional Appropriations Bill for Shawnee National Forest

Congressional Action Demonstrates Commitment to Protecting Important Natural Area in Illinois

One of Illinois' largest natural areas is expected to get even bigger with the FY '06 Interior Appropriations Bill recently approved by Congress that designates \$250,000 for Shawnee National Forest.

This funding will enable the U.S. Forest Service to acquire land within the purchase boundaries of the forest from willing sellers.

The Shawnee National Forest is one of the most biologically diverse areas of Illinois. More than 500 species of wildlife have been recorded within the forest, including the endangered Indiana bat and six other federally listed threatened or endangered species.

Fragmentation of the forest affects neotropical migratory songbirds that breed in the region by allowing more predators into the forest interior. Brown-headed cowbirds also take advantage of forest openings and leave their eggs for songbirds to raise at the expense of their offspring.

The Nature Conservancy applauds Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Barack Obama (D-IL) for helping to ensure funding for important conservation work in Southern Illinois.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international, non-profit organization that preserves plants, animals and natural communities representing the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.



Fast Response Alert System for Equestrian Trail Issues (continued from page 1)

level. Membership support and donations keep the organization working. ITR does not manage trail rides, get involved in non-trail issues such as horse slaughter or business promotion. There are no end-of-the-year awards - just the reward of more open space and better facilities for riding a horse. ITR cannot try to supplant local clubs. Only with the support of local equestrians can ITR keep their fingers on the pulse of problems and issues that may affect us all.

3. YOUR LOCAL SADDLE CLUB (like TROD, Horse Promoters, Will County Trail Riders, etc.) exemplifies a trail rider's organization concerned primarily with local issues in nearby parks and adjacent counties.

Local clubs are most successful in establishing an excellent relationship with Land Managers, Site Superintendents and operating personnel of local trails. They may hold regular meetings with trail staff and participate in trail maintenance workdays.

Local clubs can have members who attend Regional Trail and Greenway meetings, workshops, governmental meetings or planning sessions with park personnel. Their members do the groundwork and enjoy the benefits that come from a strong network of trail riding enthusiasts amid a strong horse industry.

The "locals" must address concerns such as better water supply at trail head X, a tree down at campground Y, or a unsafe crossing at ditch Z. They can call on ITR and HCI when local issues become overwhelming or at the sign of a larger problem. You and your club can call for resources and help when it is needed from the other equestrian groups in the network. It is this type of interaction that we want to enhance throughout the state.

Please be sure that you and your local saddle club, 4-H equestrian group, horse business or organization is tied into the network at some level. Please participate in the horse industry and keep our concerns on the front burner in your neighborhood. Fill out the Fast Response Alert System For Equestrian Trail Issues Questionnaire on page 9 and be notified when issues arise and things need to be done.

Long Distance Riding in Illinois

Shared by Denise Maxwell

There are several forms of long distance riding. A few brave and persistent individuals have traveled across the United States by horseback and earned a place among the "Long Riders Guild." Other riders ban together for long distance, multi-day rides such as the River-to-River and Shore-to-Shore rides in the Midwest. Competitive Trail Riding (CTR) is not as widespread as Endurance Riding, but it is gaining in popularity.

There are various organizations which sanction the CTR's across the US. Two of the largest organizations are the North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC), and the Upper Midwest Competitive and Endurance Association (UMECRA).

Several organizations manage rides throughout Illinois and surrounding states, which are sanctioned. All rides encourage beginners and most riders are very helpful on the trails. Some rides are fast paced and seem hectic while others are more leisurely but all of them require that you

move down the trail in a timely manner. There are many regional organizations managing rides to help horse owners accumulate mileage and points for their members for year-end awards. Various breed organizations, which help promote a particular breed of horse in the sport, such as Arabian, Appaloosa, Morgan, etc. accept mileage and points within the breed association to award versatility and trail honors at the end of the year.

About NATRC

Rides sanctioned by the North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC) is one of a number of competitive trail ride organizations in the United States. A competitive trail ride is not a race, but competitors cover a marked course in a given period of time.

NATRC events can be one-day, two-day, or three-day rides. Novice Division and Competitive Pleasure Division riders cover about 20 miles each day at a pace of 3½ - 5 mph.

The Open Division riders go around 30 miles per day at a pace of 4-6 mph. Open riders also travel over rougher trails at a faster pace and over more miles. There is also a Junior Division. The horse is judged on condition, soundness and trail ability on natural trail obstacles. The rider is judged on presentation (not showmanship!), grooming (no artificial enhancements, polished hooves, etc), trail equitation - not prettiness of form), trail safety/courtesy, stabling, etc.



Some NATRC riders choose to ride for "Distance Only." They follow the same rules, ride the distance, receive the same educational note cards, but are not judged and do not get scores. These riders are often using a NATRC ride to condition their horses, ride under veterinarian supervision, enjoy new trails, visit with friends and share in the spirit of distance riding without the stress of competition.

Contact NATRC at PO Box 338, Sedalia, CO 80135 (303) 688-2292. email natrc@laplaza.org.

NATRC has some BIG news!!

Do a Ride In St. Louis, Shawnee, or Land Between the Lakes.

Anyone riding in the "DO" class will follow all of the rules and the horses will be evaluated under all of the veterinary criteria. DO competitors will be awarded mileage, but for it to accumulate in NATRC, they must be a member. Doing obstacles will be optional as in HDC and leg protection will be allowed. Educational comments will still be entered on the scorecards, but no point deductions will be made.

UMERCA and AERC friends will love it and the DO class will be a perfect match for breed organizations that have their own mileage award programs. If you have been reluctant to do a NATRC ride because of the competitive aspect, DO a Ride!

When riders come to a NATRC ride camp and see for themselves how much fun it is, and what a great learning opportunity exists, these folks will become competitors when they are ready! (continued on page 8)

Long Distance Riding in Illinois

(continued from page 7)

Come DO a Ride!!!

Guidelines For The Trial Basis Of "Do" Class

The DO class will be done on a trial basis in the 2006 ride season and will be promoted as an acceptable alternative to the competitive classes. It is not a new class – it is HDC with a new, easier-to-market name.

DO entries will not be competing for placings, but will have to follow NATRC rules and ride under the supervision of the Vet judge (i.e., P&R's, etc.).

DO entries will pay the same or a slightly reduced entry fee at management's discretion.

DO entries may opt to do, or pass on, observations regarding horsemanship and/or trail ability for practice/learning/ etc.

DO entries will receive scorecards, but no point deductions will be made.

Educational comments should be entered, but entrants will not be placed.

DO entries are not counted as a competitor for points' purposes in any class, but rider and drug fees should be charged and submitted for DO entries.

DO entries will accrue mileage only in this class. A small completion prize is encouraged to show that they "Went the Distance" at a NATRC ride.

DO entries can choose to "DO" any of the Divisions, depending on the pace and distance they want to accomplish, as long as the horse meets age requirements of that division.

DO entries have the option to DO for both Horse and Horsemanship. As in present HDC, they could decide if they want to go DO in both Horse and Horsemanship, or just go DO in Horsemanship.

DO entries can be displaced by competitive riders if necessary, but rides are encouraged to accommodate DO entries if at all possible. Remember there is no scoring needed!

About AERC

Endurance Riding is defined by the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) as an athletic event with the same horse and rider covering a measured course within a specified maximum time.

Endurance rides are races which vary in distance between 25 and 100 miles and are covered in a single day. The horse with the fastest time is the winner providing the horse meets the 'fit to continue' criteria as determined by a veterinary staff.

The horses are monitored by veterinarians throughout the ride at pre-determined checkpoints and will be withdrawn from the ride if they are judged to be unsound or metabolically unfit. Each ride has mandatory rests or 'holds' for the horses throughout the ride. Some rides are longer than 100 miles but are completed over a period of several days with the horses typically covering 50 miles per day.

The rules require horses to be at least five years old to begin competing in 50-mile races. The winner is the rider who completes the ride in the least amount of time. The Best Condition award is available to those who finish in the top ten. For this valued award the judges consider the speed of the ride time, the total weight of rider and tack, and the condition of the horse at the finish line.

Most endurance rides also have a shorter novice ride of about 25 miles. These rides are not considered endurance rides by AERC, but are referred to as Limited Distance rides. These are great for more inexperienced horses and riders.

Although endurance rides are technically "races," many (if not most) riders participate for completion rather than placing. To these riders the satisfaction of completing 50 or 100 miles on a sound horse is the prize.

Endurance Riding is very standardized throughout the US because of the sanctioning by AERC. Most (if not all) endurance rides in the US are sanctioned by AERC. This enables riders to compete against each other from 1000's of miles apart. Points are accumulated throughout the year and tallied for various year-end awards.

AERC Mission Statement: To promote the sport of endurance riding and to encourage and enforce the safe use of horses in demonstrating their endurance abilities in a natural setting through the development, use and preservation of trails.

Further, AERC's mission is to maintain horse and ride records of event competition and completions, to record and provide awards to outstanding horses and riders, to ensure that all sanctioned events are conducted in a safe, fair and consistent manner, and to actively promote and conduct educational efforts and research projects that will foster a high level of safety and enjoyment for all horses and riders. The above is to be accomplished with the understanding that goals for the rider must be meshed with the abilities of the horse.

Part of AERC's mission is to attract and reward members who act to insure the highest priority for their horse's immediate and long-term physical and emotional health and well-being.

Contact the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) at 701 High St, Suite 203, Auburn, CA 95603, 916 823-2260, toll free number: 866-271-AERC, email aerc@foothill.net

About UMECRA

The Upper Midwest Endurance and Competitive Rides Association (UMECRA) is a regional distance riding organization which sanctions endurance and competitive rides. UMECRA sanctions many events throughout the Midwest.

Most of the endurance rides are 50 miles in length although there are a number of 100 mile in one-day rides, one two-day 150 mile ride, and one 3-day 150 miler. There are also limited distance endurance rides of 25-35 miles. All the endurance rides are also sanctioned by AERC.

Competitive rides are ridden within a set time period at speeds of 5 1/2 to 7 miles per hour. Most are 25-50 miles in length although there are some three-day 100 milers and others of varying lengths. Horses are scored by veterinarians on such factors as pulse, respiration, soundness, fatigue and attitude. Horsemanship is not judged.

There is a Heavyweight and a Lightweight Division for the Seniors (over 16 years of age). There is also a Junior and Novice/Rookie Division. CTR riders are given a minimum and maximum time to complete the day's ride with penalties given to those who do not meet the time constraints. In addition to proper pacing during the ride, penalties are given for horses that do not meet the recovery requirements for pulse and respiration. Everyone who finishes receives a completion award. Top ten year-end awards are given in

both endurance and competitive-lightweight, heavyweight and junior divisions. There are also awards for restricted mileage riders, rookies, high point family, top horse mileage and others.

CTR rules can be found on the UMECRA website at www.umecra.com.

Contact UMECRA at 455 Moore Heights, Dubuque, IA 319 583-0194, email LReidel769@aol.com.

Arabian Horse Distance Riding Association

The Arabian Horse naturally excels in the activities of Endurance Riding, Competitive Riding, and Pleasure Trail Riding. AHDR works to promote and encourage the use of the Arabian Horse in these fields.

The International Arabian Horse Association (IAHA) also sanctions CTR's throughout the US. They sanction Regional CTR Championships throughout the US and Canada. Check out the IAHA Ride Schedule on their website for a list of these rides.

About Competitive Mounted Orienteering

Competitive Mounted Orienteering (CMO) is one of the most challenging and exciting equestrian sports - for the competitive as well as family horse rider!

CMO is like a mounted treasure hunt, which tests your horsemanship, your map reading ability, and your compass skills - all while having great fun with your horse! We like to call it "The Thinking Horse Sport!"

The object of the sport is to ride out as an individual or a team on a prescribed course and find as many of the hidden Objective Stations as you can and get back in the least amount of time, on either a ten-station long or 5-station short

course.

The long course can be anywhere from around 8 miles to as long as 25 miles. The terrain depends on the ride manager's choice of area - but CMO rides are held all over the country from the high forests of Washington State to the rolling hills of Indiana!

The short course is much smaller and is oriented towards families, riders wishing a less competitive event, training of new horses, and new riders looking to check out the CMO fun. Many CMO rides are held in Illinois throughout the season. Contact Secretary/Illinois Director Mary Gorman, 24636 W. Miller Rd, Barrington, IL 60010, Phone: 847 540-9086, email: mlg331@sbcglobal.net.

The Long Riders' Guild

The Long Riders' Guild marks the first time in modern equestrian history that like-minded men and women are combining efforts to preserve a hitherto unmarked heritage and provide an international forum to discuss our mutual love of horses and travel. Long Riders categorically believe equestrian travel has no frontiers, political or otherwise. It is the heritage of every nation.

"Though we individually originate in every imaginable country, we as a group represent no specific nation. We will not be simplified by categories into sex, creed, allegiance to one horse breed, or lines drawn on a map. We are comrades of the saddle whose agreed upon international language is "horse." We believe the only valid definition of a Long Rider should be courage in the face of danger, resolve in the presence of hardship, and continual compassion for our horses."

Contact: thelongridersguild.com

Questionnaire For Fast Response Alert System for Equestrian Trail Issues

1. Please give us information on your organization.

Organization Name (full name, please do not use initials) _____

Geographic area of activities _____

Contact person _____

Alternate contact _____

Mailing address _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

2. In addition to your own club, please include any information on any other group in your area of which you are aware.

Organization Name _____

Contact person _____

Mailing address _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Help yourself by helping us. Please complete this page and return to us ASAP!! Thank you for your assistance.

Please reply to:

Peter Veit

610 S. Elmwood Drive, Suite 12 D, Aurora, IL 60506

Phone: 630 844-8109

Fax: 630 801-9771

email: neterrattsr@msn.com